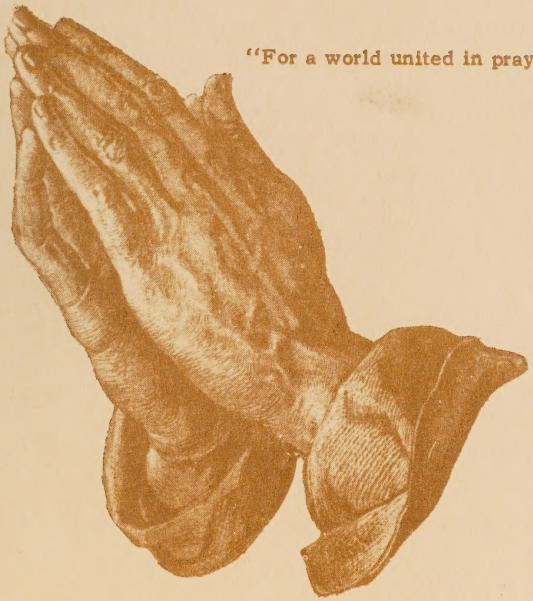
Fellowship in Prayer



"For a world united in prayer"

Democracy is the most difficult and perilous form of government because it calls for unselfishness on the part of officers and voters alike. To sustain this high morality against the tide requires religion, because it is only religion that makes morality a command of the cosmos.

— William Ernest Hocking

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OUR PURPOSE

To promote the practice of prayer among ALL religious faiths whose fundamental belief is in God, regardless of race, creed, or color, and whose tenets include the universal attributes of truth, honesty, justice and mercy, that thereby there may arise a closer relation to Almighty God and a deeper spirit of fellowship among mankind.

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FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER

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LOVE

ANYONE can be in love anytime he wants to be. Anyone can be in love with anyone else who wants to be in love. When someone is in love, he is in love with everyone else who is in love. It is a natural religious order without ritual, without philosophy, without dogma. People are attracted to each other by love and exist as a fellowship through love.

The closest two people can be is in love with each other. They choose to focus their attention on each other. They agree to help each other to know love. They are exclusive, set aside, chosen by their love for each other for love.

People who are in love with each other have the same religion. When they cease to be aware of it their differences of opinions intrude like thorns on a rose bush.

Each of us is on his own; but when we love we are not alone...and, if we choose to reach out to another, we are part of an "exclusive couple."

Nan Geller

EDITORIAL

HUMBLE AND GREAT MEN

THE QUOTATION on the cover of this issue is from the writings of the great American philosopher, Dr. William Ernest Hocking, who was a good friend of Fellowship in Prayer. Selections from his works have appeared on these pages in the past. It is with sorrow that we note his passing, early in June, at the age of ninety-two. Retiring from the faculty of Harvard University in 1943 after a distinguished career both there and earlier at Yale University, Dr. Hocking spent his later years on his hilltop farm near New Hampshire's White Mountains. His death was in the rough stone house which was largely of his own making.

We also report the death, earlier this year, of another humble and great man with whom the Fellowship has been privileged to be associated. This was T. L. Vaswani, one of the great spiritual leaders of India and the world—known to his large multitude of followers as "Beloved Dadaji." His high spiritual ideals have been related to our readers through articles reprinted from the excellent journal, *MIRA,* which was founded by the great Hindu man of God.

* * * * *

As we make note of the passing of such men as Dr. Hocking and Shri Vaswani, we might couple with natural sorrow a full measure of joy at their long and fruitful lives. Two men of vastly different background, and living for the most part on different sides of the world, these two individuals still were as one in their compassionate recognition of the deep spiritual nature of mankind.

TIME magazine, in its article on Dr. Hocking, spoke pointedly of the philosopher as it noted that one of his close associates stated—in a kindly way—that Dr. Hocking "always thought 'more with his heart than his head.'" The article went on to suggest that the philosopher "might not have quarreled with that description," and added:

"He proudly concurred in Poet John Masefield's contention that love and beauty are universal gateways to truth and agreed with Existentialist Gabriel Marcel that all of experience is a divine summons, exalting passion. He never wavered from the tenet of his first book, *The Meaning of God in Human Experience* (1912), that "the world, like human self, has its unity in a living purpose. It is the truth of the existence of God."

It is the firm conviction of the Fellowship, in turn, that in these days when even the very existence of a Higher Being is questioned and the very foundations of religion have come under severe attack that the truth of Dr. Hocking's statement will endure and inspire men of good will everywhere to deeper dedication to spiritual values.

* * * * *

Shri Vaswani will be remembered in large measure for his love and understanding of all men, for his recognition of a Unifying Force in their very beings which surmounts individually different religious backgrounds and practices. This was made strikingly clear in an article in a full issue of *MIRA* dedicated to the Dadaji. Entitled "Little Ones of the Lord," the article written by Shri Vaswani is an ode to the virtue of humility and a reference to the admonition of Jesus that "Except ye be as little children, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." He comments:

"Some day, civilization will be charged with the *Krishna Shakti*—The Christ-Force. That Force coming from the Spirit-Kingdom is, I believe, already at work. And our comrades on the other side are, as it

seems to me, busy breaking down the barriers which stand between our civilization and the life of the Spirit. The barriers cannot stand forever. The *Krishna-Shakti* must one day conquer. For the world's need is piteous; and many move in the world today as heart-broken in the Quest. The higher consciousness of humanity is beginning to pay homage to the Child-Soul... In a new reverence for the Child-Spirit lies, to my mind, the solution to the modern problem of Liberty...."

* * * * *

We are richer for having known and experienced the spiritual greatness of such men as Dr. Hocking and Shri Vaswani. Each in their own way they gained honors most of us never will know. Yet, in the example of their lives, each of us can equal their prime accomplishment. This crowning achievement, it must be stated in the cases of both of these men—and, as we reflect, in the Great ones of the ages—was an ability to retain, without conscious effort, a humility and honesty about their own frailties and weaknesses. While perhaps standing above most of us in having the gift of articulation of their profound thoughts, their greatness was born primarily in their true belief that they were no more or less than "the least of these." They felt and took upon themselves, assimilated into their own beings, the sorrows and the triumphs of mankind. Each of us can and should seek in our own ways to show the same selflessness and generosity.

Without going outside your door, you may understand all that takes place under the sky. No need to even peer from your window. The further you travel from the center of your being, the less you will know.

— Lao Tzu

BECAUSE IT MUST

Although I give my material possessions—
But, with them, have no love,
I am like a rugless floor
Noisy
And bare to look upon.
It is not the gift
Nor yet the
Giver
Which is of value.
Nay—it is more than they.
Love gives
Because it must.

— Monica Boyce

THE HAND OF BROTHERHOOD is extended. It grasps with love and tenderness the ones who need thy comfort and understanding. "God so loved the world, he gave his only Son." In return He only asks goodness, love and understanding to be shared among all. You may kneel in your church, worship in your temple, or just look to the heavens and know He is ever-there. Love all, be they rich or poor; they are the image of God. Comfort them, embrace them, heedless of their background. They are your brothers in the eyes of God. Appearance is the focus of life's camera to the living, but not the spiritual warmth of the soul. Therefore, let your inner-self overrule the traits of mankind and the spirit of love, understanding and peace shall be yours.

—Marjorie Martin

COMMON SENSE

Marius C. Thode

HOW OFTEN have your thoughts dwelt on a friend whom you have not seen for some time, whose whereabouts are unknown? Then one day your telephone rings, and at the other end is the friend. You say to him: "This must be mental telepathy. I have been thinking of you lately." He answers that he has likewise been thinking of you. What has happened is that you have been sending out what can be called "thought waves" which reached your friend, and prompted him to telephone you.

Jesus taught that God is spirit, and that the Spirit of God *dwells within each of us. "I can of mine own self do nothing. The Father that is within me, He doeth the works."* When we pray we send "thought waves" from our conscious mind into our subconscious mind, and that is where the power lies. Throughout our lives we store knowledge in our subconscious minds, and it remains filed there until our conscious mind sends a message to the subconscious that it is needed. Thus we contact the Spirit of God within us.

If we can send "thought waves" to each other and get an answer, just think how unlimited that power becomes when we use it in our prayers to God! When Jesus said: *"Oh ye of little faith,"* He meant those who will not *believe* that we can receive from God all that is good for us, simply by exercising the power of sincere prayer.

Our prayers help when we pray for another who is ill, or perhaps downtrodden. Prayer can release us from poverty, and provide our loved ones with satisfying lives. Prayer can increase our wealth. Money, if properly employed, multiplies itself, and when we include service our money benefits our fellow man. The story of the rich young man who came to Jesus is not correctly understood. He went away sad because he thought that Jesus meant that he had to rid himself of his wealth before he could enter God's Kingdom. Jesus, with His keen knowledge of men, knew that wealth was the master of this young man, and that

he loved and worshipped his wealth above anything else. Hence there was no room in his heart to worship God, and for that reason he could never enter the Kingdom. Jesus did not condemn the possession of wealth as such, but the misuse of it, and the selfish greed of those who worship Mammon. All the wealth of the world belongs to God, and we are merely the trustees of it. When we mishandle it, we soon lose custody of it.

Those who do not practice the power of prayer regularly have a vacancy in their lives; they are not getting all they could possess of the world's good things. God has provided abundant wealth in the world, sufficient for the needs of all individuals and nations. God is good. He shares with those who share their lives with Him. When we know and understand this truth, the truth will free us from the chains which bind us, and we can, through prayer, possess whatever of good we desire. When we turn to God, and heed his advice we can never go wrong.

One of the best times to talk with God is at night before you go to sleep, when you are thoroughly relaxed and quiet. If what you pray for is proper, you must have the faith to believe that your prayer will be answered. Get the *feel* of already possessing what you ask God for, and if you pray consistently, with faith, you shall have it. Hold a mental picture of what you desire, and that will become your blueprint. God will help you build according to your blueprint.

Those of us who are not familiar with the benefits to be derived from prayer must never become discouraged when first we practice it. Prayer has to become a daily habit to become effective. When we try to solve a problem in arithmetic, we may not get the right result immediately. We need to try again. If, at the first attempt the result we get is not right, we cannot say that the principle of mathematics is wrong. So it is with our prayers. The principle of proper prayer is always there, but we have got to apply it ourselves.

A few of my friends suggest that I have been somewhat lucky in life, for good things seem to come my way. Perhaps so—but the secret

is that I learned that it is not sufficient to walk with God just for my own selfish benefit. We need to *live* what we believe in, by helping our fellow man whenever sensibly possible. If we feel unhappy, we should try to make somebody else happy, and then we shall be happy too. Like the ocean, human nature can be calm or angry. As we go about our daily lives it is surprising how the oil of a friendly smile helps to calm the angry waves. Some people are too weary to give you a smile. Give them one of yours. None needs a smile so much as he who has no more to give. A smile gains value when it is given away, and then at once, it becomes a tonic to the dispenser as well as the receiver. If God has bequeathed smiles to us, He means for us to distribute them. So many poor souls are starving for sunshine.

Those who truly walk with God often learn that the impossible becomes attainable. When we help a person whom we do not particularly like, we are doubly rewarded in our hearts. The story of "The Good Samaritan" is an example. In the days of Jesus, the Samaritans were disliked and avoided, yet this good Samaritan aided a waylaid traveler who lay by the side of the road, when others had passed him by. A modern story tells of a man who was imprisoned under the heavy trunk of a fallen tree. Two youths, brothers of about sixteen and eighteen years of age, happened along. They lifted the tree trunk aside, and the man was able to free himself. That evening the boys took their father to show him the spot, and even with the help of their father they could just about budge that heavy trunk. Where did those boys suddenly gain the strength and power to have lifted that tree trunk in the afternoon? It came to them because they did not stop to think whether they could lift it. Their thoughts were on helping the man. *Let us never forget that God always helps us when we are helping others.*

"Let not thy right hand know what good the left doeth." The work of God is done quietly, for no man should wear God's heart upon his sleeve. Jesus told His disciples: *"The things that I do ye can do also."* A God-given power for good dwells within each of us, and when we use it, we contribute towards making this a better world, as God intended it to be. *"The Father that is within me, He doeth the works."*

Pride Plus Praise

Aarno Davidson

Contrary to accepted belief, pride is not always a negative emotion. In many instances it may prove a curative tonic for the soul—if it is sipped out of a champagne glass rather than from a jug!

Pride in moderation may awaken many a dormant potentiality. Show me a moderately proud person and I will point to one who is blessed with artistic assiduousness. The artist who is proud of his work also craves to be told that his efforts create a pleasing effect.

Some may say "This is vanity." Not necessarily. For it is not only written "Love thy neighbor" but "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Modern psychologists agree that in order to love and respect our fellowmen we ought to love and respect ourselves. Thus, people who nurture (and often torture) their minds with negative thoughts, feed their bodies with unwholesome goods, or appear careless with their attire, are hardly the loveable kind....

In our everyday contact with people we may discover that proud people are, as a rule, quite generous in passing out compliments. Let us not however confuse this with flattery. The latter implies saying things we do not mean. Sincere compliments, on the other hand, are utterings we *do* mean.

To acclaim somebody or something worthy of praise is one of the noblest human attributes. And yet, how eagerly people seem to condemn and how reluctantly to condone! Let, for instance, a nonconformist ignore some accepted rule of society and grapes of wrath will splash upon him from buckets of mouths. But let him do something inconspicuously benevolent and few, if any, will notice. Certainly he won't get any front page headlines.

Somewhere I read: "One pat on the back is worth two slaps on the face." But alas, the "slaps" seem so much easier than the "pats." When we fail to praise others or when we assume that

well-known "I don't care" attitude, we not only become blase but show signs of mental and spiritual deterioration.

The most effective antidote against the fashionable spreading epidemic of condemnation is the frequent sprinkling of praise!

To be more specific: When a journalist writes an unusual editorial, an artist gives a brilliant performance, a minister, priest or rabbi delivers a stirring sermon or a friend or "foe" performs a worthwhile act, let us offer praiseworthy comment by tongue or pen. The recipients, in return, will express appreciation with a warm hand shake, a sincere smile or words that soothe like fingers of rain on a humid summer evening.

By all means, let us be moderately proud of the good things we do either for our fellowmen or for ourselves. But let us likewise be magnanimous in passing out bouquets of praise to those who deserve it. This, I'm sure, will encourage others to greater thoughts and deeds. It may even offer our own morale a gratifying, much-needed lift.

When truth burns within you and me
Sweet peace lights life and makes us free,
And fills our hearts with love to share
With our neighbors who need God's care.

— Loreta Inman

WORDS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH

From BAHÁ'I Teachings for a World Faith, Bahá'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Ill.

(The first nine of the following paragraphs are inscribed over the nine entrances of the Bahá'i House of Worship in Wilmette, Illinois. These and the remainder of the material are from the pamphlet: Bahá'i Teachings for a World Faith, Bahá'i Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois.)

The earth is but one country; and mankind its citizens.

The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me.

My love is My stronghold; he that entereth therein is safe and secure.

Breathe not the sins of others so long as thou art thyself a sinner.

Thy heart is My home; sanctify it for My descent.

I have made death a messenger of joy to thee; wherefore dost thou grieve?

Make mention of Me on My earth that in My heaven I may remember thee.

O rich ones on earth! The poor in your midst are My trust; guard ye My trust.

The source of all learning is the knowledge of God, exalted be His glory.

The source of all good is trust in God, submission unto His command, and contentment in His holy will and pleasure.

The essence of wisdom is the fear of God, the dread of His scourge and the apprehension of His justice and decree.

The essence of religion is to testify unto that which the Lord hath revealed, and follow that which He hath ordained in His mighty Book.

The source of all glory is acceptance of whatsoever the Lord hath bestowed, and contentment with that which God hath ordained.

The essence of love is for man to turn his heart to the Beloved One, and sever himself from all else but God, and desire naught save that which is the desire of his Lord.

True remembrance is to make mention of the Lord, the All-Praised, and forget all else beside Him.

True reliance is for the servant to pursue his profession and calling in this world, to hold fast unto the Lord, to seek naught but His grace, inasmuch as in His hands is the destiny of all His servants.

The essence of detachment is for man to turn his face toward the courts of the Lord, to enter His presence, behold His countenance, and stand as witness before Him.

The essence of understanding is to testify to one's poverty and submit to the will of the Lord, the Sovereign, the Gracious, the All-Powerful.

The source of courage and power is the promotion of the Word of God, and steadfastness in His Love.

The essence of charity is for the servant to recount the blessings of his Lord, and to render thanks unto Him at all times, and under all conditions.

The essence of wealth is love for Me. Whoso loveth Me is possessor of all things, and he that loveth Me not is, indeed, of the poor and needy. This is that which the Finger of Glory and Splendor hath revealed. . . .

The essence of faith is fewness of words and abundance of deeds; he whose words exceed his deeds, know verily his death is better than his life. . . .

The source of all evil is for man to turn away from his Lord and set his heart on things ungodly.

The most burning fire is to question the signs of God, to dispute idly that which He hath revealed, to deny Him and carry one's self proudly before Him.

The source of all learning is the knowledge of God, exalted be

His Glory, and this cannot be attained save through the knowledge of His Divine Manifestation. The essence of abasement is to pass from under the shadow of the Merciful, and seek the shelter of the Evil One.

The essence of all that We have revealed for thee is Justice, is for man to free himself from idle fancies and imitation, discern with the eye of oneness His glorious handiwork, and look into all things with a searching eye.

DECLARE THY FAITH

Waste not
Time bewailing
measurement of worldly
Values, but seize clear
new vistas,
At hand.

Command
each new dawn,
Principal and purpose.
And declare most valiantly,
Thy Faith.

There is no place for fear.
Clarify all Truth now.
Share tender concern everywhere,
today.

— Erica May Brooks

A Worker of Miracles

This article was specially written for Fellowship in Prayer by the Industrial Home for the Blind of Brooklyn, New York, which is sponsoring the current Anne Sullivan Centennial Commemoration together with the Perkins School for the Blind of Watertown, Massachusetts. We are grateful to Clara Ullrich Samuels, for making contact with these groups and suggesting that the article be written.

Until a few years ago, most people had never heard of Anne Sullivan. Even today, many do not recognize the name. To them she is known only as "The Miracle Worker," a clever title for the successful dramatization of a powerful episode in Anne Sullivan's many years as teacher and companion of the deaf-and-blind Helen Keller.

Since that dramatization, and especially this year, the centennial of her birth, sponsored by The Industrial Home for the Blind and Perkins School for the Blind, much attention has been given to Anne Sullivan's wonderful work and a certain amount of attention has been paid to her remarkable rise from poverty, neglect, and ignorance. Little has been said—and, apparently, little is known—of her inner life, the spiritual force that saw her through her own difficulties and gave her the courage it required to make a valuable human being of the wretched, unruly, and desperate Keller child.

The more profound workings of any personality are never fully known by another human, and Anne Sullivan left no significant writings that might clearly illuminate the turmoils and triumphs of her own heart. There is no question, of course, but that here was a being of magnificent conviction. Her physical and intellectual attainments, in the face of hardships that would have crushed many another, speak for themselves in this respect.

And who can fail to be awed by the patience, devotion, intui-

tion and inspiration that Anne Sullivan demonstrated in setting Helen Keller gloriously free from her prison of silence and darkness. In so doing, Anne Sullivan was intent only upon the job at hand; it is not likely she had even the time to think much of what her efforts could mean for the entire world's deaf-blind, many of them still unborn. It might well be that her single-mindedness was in itself one of her greatest blessings.

Since the worth of Anne Sullivan's work is not to be denied, and since her rare qualities are so apparent from that work, the only area of original thought in this writing seems to lie in that interior geography of which Anne Sullivan left so little information.

Speculation on the nature of this terrain, especially since it must be incomplete and inconclusive, is a daring thing, a clumsy intrusion. Yet its possible worth, however slight, encourages it. One question looms immediately: How could a person so fired with determination, so fiercely devout, contrive to light and tend the flame within her defenseless pupil without consuming her in the process?

In essence, the great spiritual truth embodied in Anne Sullivan's life and work is to be found here:

A towering ambition—but for another person. Devotion that nourishes but does not overwhelm. Courage for the bold experiment, but always tempered with sensitivity to its dangers. Perhaps most importantly, the capacity to give and continue giving without burdening the recipient or diminishing one's own abundance.

In these qualities, Anne Sullivan was truly a worker of miracles, as much if not more than in her tangible attainments. And to the many inspirations of those attainments there must be added another set. Those inner dynamics of Anne Sullivan are, in all their magnitude, beyond the most of us, but some are certainly attainable by all, and most of them are within the realm of reasonable aspiration.

ANNE SULLIVAN MACY

She took a badly handicapped child
And taught it the realities of life.
She molded a glorious creature
Who overcame her physical plight.

She took a wild and distorted mind
And calmed it in its fears.
She molded that mind with unbiased
knowledge
Which has fruited these many years.

She took a soul into her keeping
And taught it the grandeur of God.
Her life's work - Helen Keller -
Is something of which we're all proud.

— Clara U. Samuels

THE KINDLY WORD THAT FALLS TODAY
MAY BEAR ITS FRUIT TOMORROW.

— *Gandhi*

He who has not sacrificed in the great cause of human well-being has not yet really lived.

— Harry Halsey Starrett

THE GREAT ONE

Winifred Willard

THE HEART OF MAN is deeply restless. Constantly man searches for that which will satisfy. So he often makes gods for himself. Anciently, they were of brass or stone or ivory or wood. Modern man often makes his own gods, usually of money or power. These are set up in the shrine of man's heart where he worships them. For the heart of man is made for worship. Man's gods do not work well. And he is increasingly restless and unsatisfied.

As far back as beginning of time—and none can go behind the beginning—there was God, the All Loving and All Powerful Creator. He made everything that was made and placed it in perfect array. His Book says, "He hangs the earth upon nothing!" Only an Almighty God can do that! In the fulness of aeons of time, He created man in His own image, to live upon earth. And He gave man dominion. In a spectacular and dramatic way, the Almighty God created a companion for man. These two had the world to themselves, to enjoy.

Just one thing the Creator told them not to do. But that one thing they did do. Then trouble began with a vengeance. They had been care-free and happy. Now they became fearful. Greed and envy, jealousy and selfishness came into their world, even murder! For they had disobeyed their Father God! Despite their evil doings, the Father loved them.

More people came to live on earth—all kinds of people—and He loved them too. They were also His children. They often disobeyed laws He had made for their guidance and their good. So they kept getting into more and more trouble. Even as today! Still His Love knows no limits. And His Love satisfies!

The time came when the Love of the Father God prompted Him to send His Son from Planes of Light to the planet of earth, for a season, to teach man about His Father and His purpose for humankind and about His Father's Love.

MUIR TRAIL

Dust clouds smother the breath
As thin air tightens steel bands
Around a thundering heart.
The shale trail spirals fitfully upward.
Suddenly down into the valley
The eagle plummets like a stone
Upon its prey.
And far away in the distance
The jagged teeth of purple peaks gnaw
At the blue heart of heaven.
Then breaking upon our vision
Sapphire waters, cooling parched tongues. . .
Soothing thirsty minds. . .
Healing fevered souls.
Dust. . .danger. . .distance
Deliverance into dynamic life
Upon a mountain trail.

— Zelma S. Dennis

THE SOURCE

To love people, yet wish to be alone. . .
A dilemma many must face.
How can one be outgoing
Yet retain a private place?
A place where Source and self
Can commune as one?
A place where there is awareness
Of the Highest One?
In the midst of hurried crowds,
Or with friends both old and dear,
A quiet reflection will reveal
The Source is ever near.

— Florence Beck Unangst

HOLY HOUR

I watched a dear one leave
in Life's own sacred hour—
when death reveals a birth
of soul into Beyond.

I watched a heart travail
in presence of love divine
poured forth from heavenly realms,
as Life threw back dark veils.

I watched a mind release
its sense and grasp of earth,
lift up its conscious sight
and welcome nearing flight.

I watched a strong will yield
to judgment of its Lord,
and saw the power of Spirit
embrace with pure sweet rest.

I watched warm breath grow faint—
slowly, softly, smoothly,
its last thin outward flow
bespoke deep faith and peace.

I watched a holy hour
in eternal Life arrive—
on wings of prayer a soul
returned to Home — with God.

— Lillian Wade Koerner

The Quest

ASK NOT, AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you."

"For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that knocketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. . ."

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"

Matthew 7:7, 8 & 11.

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My Name, I will do it."

John 14: 13, 14.

IF THIS BE SO, how can we give this such a title? If this be so, why are so many prayers not answered, and faith in a loving God lost? If this be so, and prayers are answered, (since sooner or later we may get what we have set our hearts upon, through the single-minded aim) why is it that the fruit in the mouth is bitter to the digestion? And why is it that having had our desires granted, we are still restless and unhappy?

It is generally thought this is so because we have asked amiss; lacking wisdom, our desires have sprung from the craving born of delusion and ignorance, and this is why the first step on the Noble Eightfold Path of the Buddha is to recognize that all craving causes suffering because of the tyranny of our desires.

There is a difference between the sayings as quoted by Matthew and John, and here perhaps we have a clue. How very natural it is

to the average man to take Matthew at his word, and to expect the new house, the new job, the change of circumstances, the longed-for affection of someone, healing of body or relationships (for our desires are legion) to come to us simply for the asking; the closed door before us to open directly we knock! Our Father in His Love, knows we have need of these things.

Or does He? Often we must bring sadness to the ministering angels who are the mediators between earth and Heaven, aware as they are of the disillusion ahead of us, the pain we cause to ourselves and others. For it is impossible to translate the truths of the Spirit into material gain. We ask from the wrong level, and very wisely sometimes we are denied, sometimes not; and this is because only through experience may we learn to put the Kingdom of God first, after which everything we need (not necessarily what we want) *is* added unto us. Our cups overflow with blessings and others about us are refreshed also because it is natural to share all we have.

Is there then no asking, no seeking, no knocking? That would mean inertia, stagnation, resignation to what life sends us, and we lament the depression and despair of such souls who have "given in" with lowered heads contemplating not stars, but mud.

There *is* an asking, a seeking and a knocking, but it comes not from but *through* the ignorant mind, illuminating it, from the soul itself which knows of that which alone can satisfy and fulfill and bring awakening, release and peace to the whole being. This asking, seeking and knocking may continue for many years, as we look here and there for teachers, clues, experiences that seem to hold out the golden keys. But often they prove but gilt, and tarnish all too soon. Yet the quest goes on, until one day we realize that of ourselves we can do nothing, for though rich in worldly knowledge, we are very poor in wisdom.

It is then that at last we are obliged to cry: "Not my will, but Thine." We stop asking, except in His Name, which means surrendering to the wisdom of God. The time comes when we do not ask for anything,

"for the Heavenly Father knows ye have need of these things." When we have allowed to fall from us all that is not necessary for the soul, we are lifted above our ignorance into a realm, a condition, a state of consciousness which opens up to us all the riches of Divine Grace.

When we have touched, accepted and entered into the Source of all Harmony, circumstances and relationships become more harmonious. When there is nothing that impedes the flow of God's Power, Wisdom and Love, sick bodies and minds become well. Friends, affection, abundance on all levels including that which is necessary for everyday living, flow to us without having done anything to attract them. It is all a great wonder to us, something we cannot (and dare not try to) understand with our limited reason. Yet it is supremely logical on the higher reaches of the Spirit.

For the asking, the seeking and the knocking, deep within the soul, goes on most naturally, without any outward movement, or word. We may not even be consciously aware of it, and there is no need to be. We have given unto God our hearts, our lives, all that the future holds, now and to all eternity. Once we touch that inner realm of the Spirit which at the same time pervades all things, all events, we *know* there is a power and a wisdom into which we can safely give our complete trust forever more. We no longer need to ask, seek and knock in ignorance—that state has been passed through, sometimes painfully, but how worth while, if it brought us to the threshold of Divine Grace in Whom at last we realize we have our being.

And the intercessions for others, our loving prayers for the sick, the deprived, the unhappy? Neither do we ask that *their* troubles may be taken from them, though indeed we would have such relief, so much more peace of mind if they were. It requires courage, unlimited patience, great steadfastness in faith, to trust God's wisdom for them, as well as for ourselves. But aware of the reality of that incomparable Grace, we can and should always *make a way* for It to flow through and make the right Divine adjustments for them; for Divine Love to bless them, and lead them to their highest good in which alone is abiding hap-

piness and peace. This is the open secret of all true healing. At the same time we are not to be expectant of results, or deceived by appearances. For the one we lift to God may have to pass through similar valleys to our own, before that soul may come to the green pastures and still waters. And how much they need our loving help at such times, the sharing of our own experience. . .

This realization and practice is not, of course, achieved all at once; many times we reach for footholds in this new consciousness and fall back into the old resentments, frustrations and disappointments because life is not turning out as we hoped. But it does not matter, for gently though imperceptibly Divine Grace is operating within the soul: we are not so troubled as we used to be by those foolish but most natural reactions; little by little the soul is being disentangled from them.

Nevertheless, a perseverance of discipline is required to gain firmer footholds, the stage of not asking but trusting instead; a calm and impartial observation of the cunning deceptions and habits of thinking that would drag us back and down—the subtle temptations in the life of the Spirit. Time must also be found for our meditations that we may keep in touch with our Source, that the mind may be stilled in order to be illumined, and reflect Divine wisdom. Then we see how foolish and vulgar it was to ask in order to get; how unnecessary if not actually dangerous. Then we may understand why the word "discipline" comes from "disciple."

— SCIENCE OF THOUGHT PRESS
Chichestor, England.

Lord, we pray not for tranquility;
we pray that Thou grant us strength and
grace to overcome adversity.

— Savonarola

The Finest Place in the World

W. J. Thompson

DURING many years as preacher, college teacher, editor, and writer, it has been my privilege to live in various parts of the world, sometimes near famous places. In London I often passed Buckingham Palace, and witnessed a number of royal processions. In Canada, in British Columbia, I lived in Victoria, a few minutes walk from "Parliament House," close to magnificent scenery. In Niagara Falls, New York, the roar of the falls could be heard continually, except in severe winter times.

In Hawaii, my home was near the volcano on "Mauna Loa," and the fiery crater, "Kilauea"; and I once watched a village disappear beneath an avalanche of hot lava, and then saw the lava plunge into the sea! In Southern California, I lived in Sierra Madre, at the foot of Mount Wilson, with its famous observatory housing a great telescope.

Now my home is in a metropolitan city of southern California and my apartment windows look out upon a gigantic "freeway," with thousands of automobiles speeding by every hour. Another window of the same dwelling gives an entrancing view of the majestic Sierra Madre range of mountains (and you may judge which window attracts me most.)

But for "the finest place in the world" I ask you to read: Exodus 33, verse 21: *"And the Lord said, 'Behold, there is a place by me.'"* In this Scripture story, Moses, facing a time of trial, turned to God and prayed, *"I beseech thee, show me thy glory,"* and the Lord said, *"Behold there is a place by me."*

This is more than the story of an ancient revelation; it is God's message to every sincere, seeking soul.

To every human being, bewildered by trials, baffled by the problems of life, earnestly seeking guidance and help, comes this divine invitation, "Behold, there is a place by me."

When we turn to the Lord in time of need we discover *it is a place of light!* This does not mean that all mystery disappears when a person turns to God. There are some devout people who know too much. They can "explain" everything, and give you the impression that, as far as they are concerned, God has no secrets left. It is much wiser, and certainly more Christian, to admit there are some things hidden from us.

At the same time, it is true that when God becomes 'real' and dominant in the life of a man, He gives that man light and guidance he never had before! Many today can truthfully repeat words written long ago: "By His light I walked through darkness." (Job 29:3).

"The Lord said, 'Behold there is a place by me.'" It is not only a "place of Light"—but also a *"Place of Life"*—for we need more than light if we are to make the best of our opportunities. In addition to light we must have strength!

Victory in Defeat—

Defeat may serve as well as victory to shake the soul and let the glory out. When the great oak is straining in the wind, the boughs drink in new beauty, and the trunk sends down a deeper root on the windward side. Only the soul that knows the mighty grief can know the mighty rapture. Sorrows come to scratch out spaces in the heart for joy.

— Edward Markham

By courtesy of Frank A. Mastropaolo

THE SIX WISE MEN

Mark Halpern

IN ANCIENT Persia there lived a king who prided himself on the many illustrious wise men he had in his court. Often, in order to display their wisdom, he would command the sages to enter into royally decreed contests of philosophical discernment. As a rule, the king himself would pose a question on some particular phase of life, then call upon each of the wise men in the contest to give answer.

At one such philosophical symposium in the king's palace, the question put by the monarch was: "What is that in life which is of greatest value to man?"

All who were gathered in that spacious hall of damasked magnificence waited with bated breath for the various views on so intriguing a subject. Six of the king's wisest philosophers had been entered in the contest of sagacity. They stood in two rows of three each, looking up to where the king sat in his throne on the dais, waiting in respectful silence for him to designate who was to give the first answer.

For some moments the king remained motionless, as though pondering the deep import of the question he had asked. He seemed like a carved regal figure in his massive throne of ivory and gold which stood on the dais beneath a scarlet canopy. Robed in purple and crowned with a bejeweled triple-tiered diadem, his august majesty was one that inspired hushed respect and reverence in all.

At length he nodded for the sage nearest to his right to be the first to speak.

Bowing low, a venerable-looking white-bearded man began: "O king, many indeed are the things of highest value to man. The Almighty

God of the Universe has been most liberal with his blessings to mankind. How base is the ingratitude of man in making complaint of the passing ills of life and never pausing to count up the many gifts received from God. And the greatest of these gifts I hold to be breath. For without breath, man could not come into this life and thus inherit the treasures the Creator has heaped upon him."

The court whispered and murmured to one another in admiration at the answer given.

And the answer of the second sage: "O king, I hold that wisdom is above all else of greatest value to man. For without wisdom, he stumbles through life like a blind man stumbling in the dark. Without wisdom, man is unable to find the lighted highway of the soul that leads him, in the end, into the everlasting Light and Light of his true immortal Divine Self."

And the answer of the third sage: "O king, breath and wisdom are indeed of great value to man. But in my ninety and odd years of life, I have found nothing of higher virtue and worth, in this difficult school of experience here on earth, than patience. Has it not been said that patience is the jewel of the crown. Aye, and the fairest jewel man can own."

And the answer of the fourth sage: "O king, let us not forget our greatest benefactor. What would this earth be—where would be the beauties and life-sustaining bounties of nature—without the sun? Let us praise and glorify God for His greatest of all gifts to His children on earth. Let us be eternally and infinitely thankful for the sun."

And the answer of the fifth sage: "O king, I give you that which every mortal can give, and in the giving of it, gain more than he had before. I give you that which if man but continually pour it out liberally, he will gain the world and all its kingdoms; nay, not alone the kingdoms

of this world, but the kingdom of God. I give you love as my answer."

The court became animated for the moment at the last spoken words. Ripples of ill-suppressed excitement ran over the richly dressed assemblage.

But all was silence again, as the sixth sage began: "O king, profoundly wise have been the answers given by my worthy and illustrious compeers. Great indeed in value to man are breath, wisdom, patience, the sun, and above all, love. I bow in deep respect and admiration before the great sagacity of such illuminating observations. But I ask thee, O king, could there be breath, or wisdom, or patience, or the sun, or even love, without time to breathe, to think wise thoughts, to be patient, to get due benefit of the sun, to love. Therefore O king, my answer is that time is the one thing in this life on earth which is of greatest value to man."

Spontaneous and unrestrained applause broke out from the court and king alike, as the sixth sage concluded his remarks.

At last the king, rising under the scarlet canopy, held up his hand for silence. When all were quiet, he addressed himself with a gracious smile to the sage who had last spoken: "Thou has uttered truth that cannot be denied, O wisest of men. Henceforth thou wilt ever be at my right hand in my council chamber when I sit in judgment on affairs of state. Thy wisdom shall guide me in the rendering of justice."

* * * * *

SINCE TIME is of such high value, let us value the time we have and use it for the highest ends. Let us do all the good we can and remedy all the wrongs we have done, while still we have time.

HAPPINESS HERE AND NOW

THE NATURE OF HAPPINESS

Genevieve Burnell

The more people discover about the pattern of their lives and know the aim, know what they are heading for, the more effectual their lives are. Those who go around the mulberry bush always thinking that maybe some day in the future they will find happiness, really have not taken aim. If a person has a goal and he knows what it is, he finds his life much more effectual.

Thomas Aquinas has wonderful treatises on the aim and the object and the end, the purpose, the reason, for man and all that he does. One of his arguments for the existence of God is that everything in creation has some intelligible end; it is all directed toward something; in the whole working of creation everything is working toward good. (He borrows this argument from Aristotle, but he has Christianized it.) If things are not diverted, if they are given their natural course, they have a purpose; plant life develops and then flowers, then bears fruit. All have a cycle of activity; everything in creation is working to an end.

When it comes to the situation of man we find the greatest confusion because he seems to be defeating his best good at every turn. That is because he has lost his aim. But, as Saint Thomas says, the thing that shows the intelligent governance of creation is that things, if they are not disturbed and interrupted, will attain their created good; they are always working toward that. And he uses the illustration of watching an arrow fly through the air and hit a bullseye. Even though you do not see the archer draw the arrow and send it flying, you know that there must be an intelligence directing that arrow towards its goal,

because there is nothing in the arrow, in the air, nor in the target itself that could do it; it would have to be an intelligent direction. Well, in the same way man has been made right, he is God's masterpiece and he has been endowed in such a way that he can direct his motivation toward his goal. But, for his own rational sake he needs to know what that goal is, so that he is not diverted into chasing will-o'-the-wisps or a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow; he needs to know what he is about, what is his purpose in life.

And so we again refer to Saint Thomas Aquinas who says that the last end of man—that doesn't mean his destruction, not that kind of an end—what he is directed toward is happiness. It is happiness that motivates all his activities even though he takes such a roundabout course and goes astray. People wander because they lose track of that which will give them happiness; they become confused and they look to temporal things as the object of their happiness. But if they can discover what it is that will give them happiness, even though they stop along the way to pick wildflowers, they keep on the track, and they keep their eyes on the goal.

Aimless people wander and suffer from their very aimlessness; they develop a languor, a weakness, because they are aimless in their minds and bodies and hearts and spirits. We must recognize what our objective is. Actually, the beginning and the end of man has to be the same because they are both necessarily in God. And of course this has been called to your attention in the simple statement that we often repeat: From God, to God, and in God. It is axiomatic; if God is all there is, the beginning and the end must be in God. And if man had his beginning in God and did not have his end in God, he would certainly be frustrated, because he would go out into what is called the expanding space of the universe and never return. The scientists today are saying that the universe makes a circle, and so if we move out into things, externalize our actions, we also must make the return journey. And because God is omnipresent, it must all take place in Him. Man is ordained to his happiness, and if he keeps his direction, he is going to be happy along the way.

This quotation is from Jacques Maritain in his book called The Person and the Common Good:

The human person is ordained directly to God.

That is, he is created for God. And that is why he can never be satisfied, he can never be happy, short of God. Man is made right so that he can achieve, with his intellect and with his heart and with his will, with the soul and with his body, he can attain his fulfillment in God.

> *The human person is ordained directly to God as to its absolute ultimate end. Its direct ordination to God transcends every created common good—both the common good of the political society and the intrinsic common good of the universe.*

That is, ordained to a happiness that is not situated in his society in the world of experience, but which transcends all of this because this ordination of happiness is to something that is, to use a slang expression—out of this world. It is greater than the mind can conceive of; we cannot even make pictures of it. But man is ordained to this and until he has fulfilled his ordination he feels his hunger; he is not satisfied.

Of course it might seem that if man is ordained to God and he doesn't have God now, there is not much hope of ever having Him. God is all there is. We can speak of Him as truth, deity, or whatever name you want to use—the Absolute. But if He is the Absolute, if He is omnipresent, He is all there is, and therefore there is no trying to attain God in the sense of not having Him now. It is more like an awakening within ourselves to the presence, the omnipresence of God. And when once that awakening has taken place, the first inkling of it comes in

this sense of happiness that God is God; and that happiness has nothing to do with the conditions that surround us.

If the axiom of the omnipresence of God Who is goodness—eternal, absolute goodness—if this has laid hold of you so that you are actually unable to conceive of an opposite, you have a happiness that is much greater than anything that might be termed the common good of the universe, or of any kind of society, or anything that the world could possibly offer.

Our first need is to rid our minds of the false sense about happiness; that it depends on other people, on conditions, on situations. Truly speaking, it has nothing to do with these things; only with your Instruction. It has to do with that depth in yourself that you have tapped, that place where your soul is restored, awakened to its true nature; and it has become the cup that receives the infinitely-flowing spirit of truth that you do not try to dam up in yourself or hold back, but that pours through you.

Happiness must manifest in you. It isn't something that you can pick out of thin air. Happiness is a spiritual gift, but it manifests in you, and it is always pressing upon you because it is motivating you. The moment you stop—like the old Indian, on a forced march, who sat down and "waited for his soul to catch up"—you begin to recognize that the attribute of your soul is happiness, and it is pressing upon you to express itself in everything that you do, in your intellect, in your will, in your heart, in all your faculties.

(To be continued)

O Lord, reform thy world—beginning with me.

— A Chinese Christian's Prayer

From the Bookshelf.....

of Mrs. Doris E. Symmonds,
Visalia, California

THE INVITATION carried in the June issue to submit selections for this section has produced encouraging response. We repeat—all selections will be considered. Please limit the length to approximately 250 words and be sure the material is accompanied by a full description of the source.

Following is the selection provided by Mrs. Symmonds:

From: EXISTENCE UNDER GOD, the Christian Life of Prayer, by Albert Edward Day; Abingdon Press, 1958. Selection from Chapter Nine, entitled "The Wonder-working God."

God is able to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves.

The fruit of the Spirit is joy. Not the frivolous, feverish, thing-dependent, creature of circumstance which men call happiness, the target of the advertiser, the bait of the exploiter, the quest of the hapless millions—but Joy! Something wells up within like a spring of water—something that can be either a ravishing ecstasy or an unperturbed serenity; something that lives through tragedy as the sea lives through the storm yet remains the sea; something that does not have to be sought but seeks one even through pain and sorrow; something that is like gravitation that keeps one's feet on the ground but also is like wings that take one skyward; something that is like background music blessing work and sweetening slumber.

This, too, is God at work. Those who have it watch its emergence with wonder. They know it is not just fortunate temperament; some of them were once morose and gloomy. They are sure it is not something they have wrought within themselves by reading "peace of mind" literature or practicing autosuggestion. It has been given to them since they began *to keep company with God.* It has come because they are with God. It is living joy....

NOTICES and COMMENTS

SPECIAL PROJECT. The Fellowship, as noted some time ago, is endeavoring to make contact with religious leaders around the world and encourage them to emphasize the goals of truth and brotherhood we all seek. The names and addresses of clergymen and other spiritual leaders who might use their forums for such an expression will be appreciated. We will be glad to contact them and send along a complimentary copy of the June 1965 issue which commemorated the fifteenth anniversary of the incorporation of Fellowship in Prayer. It includes an article on the life of the late Carl Allison Evans, who founded the Fellowship and whose farsighted vision we are endeavoring to keep alive.

DUE CREDIT. In the June issue we carried a poem, *Our Burden Bearer,* and listed the author as "unknown." We are indebted to those readers who pointed out our negligence in not immediately recognizing the poem as the work of Phillips Brooks. There was no intent to include the poem without proper credit. We are especially grateful to Miss Estelle Aber, and to Mrs. Paul Dyal for bringing this matter to our attention; Mrs. Dyal spent a considerable amount of time researching the poem at the library.

IN THIS ISSUE. Among articles in this issue, we would like to note that *The Great One* by Winifred Willard is from the prologue to a lovely small book published under that same title. We are indebted to our good friend Grace Bush for suggesting that the material be submitted. We also are pleased to have another article from our new Trustee, Marius C. Thode, whose enthusiasm for our work is most encouraging.

GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS. We are happy to note an increase in recent months in the number of gift subscriptions to the bimonthly being sent by readers to friends. We consider it appropriate for virtually any occasion and would suggest that others consider the gesture.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES. FIP is published six times a year at the rate of $3.00. Special rates are available for additional copies.

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS?

If your address has changed in recent months, we would like to be notified promptly, so that there may be no delay in receiving each issue of the bimonthly. Please send your old address as well as the new one—and don't forget to add the Zip Code number. Thank you!

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS—

We are sincerely grateful to those readers who have renewed, and are renewing their subscriptions. Those who have not yet done so are invited to renew as soon as possible. Ours is a nonprofit fellowship and only through the help and cooperation of those who are interested in our work can FELLOWSHIP IN PRAYER be improved and extended throughout the world.

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Into the bud,
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Thought fulfills the hour
To bloom expressed
In action's flower.

— Carla Patsuris

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